

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



August 11, 2003



This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide Command Information materiel concerning world events and the U.S. military's role in those events. Ordnance specific events will be covered if appropriate. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.

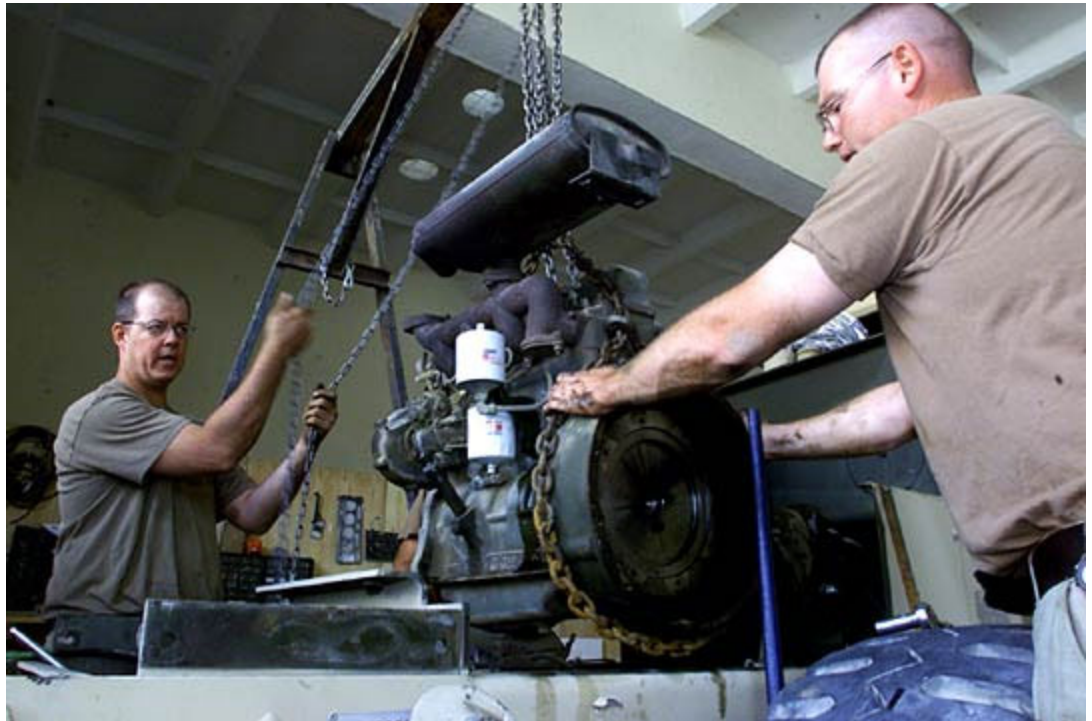
Iowa Guard maintenance unit repairs anything mechanical, electrical in Afghanistan

by U.S. Army Sgt. Greg Heath,
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan, Aug. 8, 2003 — For soldiers at Bagram Air Field, if anything mechanical or electrical breaks down there is only one place to take them.

The challenges of keeping everything up and running falls into the laps of a small army of mechanics, electricians and metal workers from the 3654th Maintenance Company from the Iowa Army National Guard.

In their direct service maintenance unit, the 64 citizen-soldiers work on jobs ranging from repairing night vision goggles and Mark-19 Grenade Launchers, to overhauling humvee engines and bringing offices' and tents' broken air conditioners back to life.



Iowa Army National Guard heavy-wheeled mechanics Sgt. Gary Fuller and Spc. Marc Thurman, 3654th Maintenance Co., remove the engine from a forklift so they can begin repairs. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Greg Heath

"We're all inclusive; we have all the shops you would have in a peacetime environment in one company," said 3654th Maintenance Company commander Capt. Chad Stone.

The company encompasses a multitude of different maintenance functions, to include light and heavy wheel maintenance, an allied trade shop (metal work), communication equipment repair, generator repair and armament repair shops, to list a few.

Basically the maintenance company can lend a hand for almost any type of mechanical or electrical need a unit would have, according to 3654th Maint. Co. 1st Sgt. Larry Kientz.

The company was mobilized in Iowa in March and after spending two months at Fort Riehl, Kan., being validated for active duty, they arrived at Bagram Airbase in late June.

Along with 11 plane loads of equipment, the Iowa National Guard soldiers also brought a lot of experience with them to Afghanistan.

"As a National Guard unit, we're unique in that the jobs that a lot of our people do here are the jobs they do back home in everyday life," said Kientz.

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SECURING THEIR POSITION — Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) secure their position for another squad conducting a cordon and search of suspected homes for weapons in Mosul, Iraq, Aug. 5, 2003. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kieran Moore

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Iowa Guard maintenance unit repairs anything mechanical, electrical in Afghanistan continued

Many of the soldiers in the unit are full-time technicians who work for the Iowa National Guard maintaining military equipment back at their home stations. “It’s pretty easy for us to keep on top of things,” said full-time technician Staff Sgt. Scott McKenzie, radio repair and electrical supervisor, adding that with all the other technicians they can help teach the younger soldiers.

Often the only thing holding them back is lack of parts to do the job.

“It’s hard for us to get all the parts we need here because Iraq has higher priority right now,” Stone said.

“Some days we’re busy, but some days we’re just waiting for parts and we can’t do anything,” said Spc. Rowland Valderrama, 3654th Maint. Co.

Even with the lack of parts, the unit has completed over 300 job orders in a little of a month in country. Sometimes to finish a job they just have to get a little creative.

“Back home you had the luxury of having every tool and every part and everything you needed to get the job done,” said heavy wheel mechanic Staff Sgt. Noel Isaac, 3654th Maint. Co. “Here you have to improvise just to keep things up and running. A lot of people will just put stuff on hold while they wait for a certain part to get in, but our guys will take the initiative and come up with a plan to make a needed part, fabricate it from scratch or plan another way to make it work. It just shows how dedicated these guys are to their job.”

As National Guard soldiers, they know sometimes people will have preconceived notions about what they are capable of accomplishing.



Spc. Ed Taggart, 3654th Maintenance Co., Iowa Army National Guard, welds pieces of metal together on a new tool box he created. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Greg Heath

“I don’t think we’ve had to prove anything,” Stone said. “I think that there were some people initially that had some misconceptions about what a National Guard unit could do compared to an active duty unit but once our soldiers got in the shops all those stereotypes were thrown to the wayside.”

“If we weren’t a good unit we wouldn’t be over here,” added Sgt. Richard Ford, heavy-wheeled mechanic, 3654th Maint. Co. “I know every morning at our formations they tell us that other units are talking about us already and saying we’re doing a good job, and that makes us feel pretty good.”

GI killed, two hurt in Iraq bomb attack

by Ra'ad Kadum Abbas

BASRA, Iraq (AP) - British troops restored badly needed electricity to parts of Basra and supervised distribution of gasoline Monday after two days of protests over fuel and power shortages. In northern Iraq, a U.S. soldier was killed and two others wounded in a bomb attack.

The soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division came under attack with a homemade bomb in front of the police station they were guarding in Baqouba, 45 miles north of Baghdad, late Sunday, Maj. Mark Solomons said.

The death brought to 57 the number of U.S. troops killed in action since May 1, when President Bush declared major combat over.

In Basra, a British patrol returned fire after it came under attack late Sunday, wounding two assailants, British military spokesman Capt. Hisham Halawi told The Associated Press. Two others escaped and were being pursued, he said. There were no British casualties.

Basra had been one of the quietest cities in the country. But on the second day of protests Sunday, an Iraqi protester and a Nepalese security guard were shot dead.

The protester was killed after an angry crowd tried to block four four-wheel drive vehicles crossing the main bridge leading to the airport and the British military headquarters. It was not clear who shot the demonstrator.

The dead guard worked for Global Security, a private company hired to provide security and other services for coalition bases throughout the country. The guard was bringing mail from Kuwait to United Nations staff in Basra. He was shot by an unknown assailant as a two-car convoy neared an intersection in the center of the city, coalition spokesman Iain Pickard said.

British troops patrolling the area gave away their own fuel to calm the demonstrators, coalition spokesman Charles Heatly said from Baghdad.

Over the weekend, about 1,000 protesters blocked roads with rows of burning tires and threw rocks at vehicles and British troops, who suffered only minor injuries, Halawi said.

"The town is calm this morning. People have had power since last night, and petrol is getting at petrol stations," he said.

In Baghdad, Heatly said coalition forces were taking steps to alleviate the power and fuel crisis in Basra. The coalition also brought in two new gas turbine generators to try to patch up the antiquated electricity system, and British soldiers were supervising distribution at gas stations to make sure people were not charged exorbitant



A U.S. soldier adjusts U.S. flag just before the start of Sergeant Leonard Simmons from Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Div., memorial service in Mosul, Sunday Aug. 10, 2003. Simmons, who was from Clarksville, Tennessee, died of cardiac arrest on Aug. 6, 2003, while on duty. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup)

black-market prices.

Late Sunday, two bombs exploded about 60-70 yards from the British office in central Baghdad, witnesses said. There was no visible damage to the office, but a Syrian national who was part of a convoy of trucks taking supplies to the office was injured, according to the witnesses.

There was no indication whether the British office was the target. U.S. troops removed the truck in which the Syrian was injured within the hour of the explosion.

A team of FBI investigators, meanwhile, searched the bombed Jordanian Embassy, where a car bomb on Aug. 7 killed 19 people.

The attack rattled Baghdad residents who feared it signaled a rise of terror tactics in the already violent Iraqi capital. L. Paul Bremer, the top civilian administrator in Iraq, said the al-Qaida-linked Ansar al-Islam group was at the top of his list of suspected terrorist organizations operating in the country.

U.S. military officials have blamed almost daily attacks on Saddam loyalists and Iraqis angered by a foreign occupation. There is growing concern that foreign fighters in Iraq may join the conflict, conducting terrorist attacks like the one on the Jordanian Embassy.

Elsewhere Sunday, the U.S. military reported that four American soldiers were wounded in guerrilla attacks, including two at the Baghdad University complex and two others in Saddam's hometown of Tikrit.

One U.S. soldier died of heat stroke and another was found dead in his living quarters on Sunday, the military said.

Joint training on the way for joint fighters

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Aug. 8, 2003 – A Marine unit facing combat runs into opposition. The call goes out for fire support. In the past, the call would likely have gone to a Marine artillery unit or air asset.

Today, that call could go to an Army helicopter unit or an Air Force precision-strike aircraft. It could go to a Navy fighter-bomber staging off a carrier or even to a submarine that would launch a Tomahawk missile.

In other words, the joint force is now a reality and the American military must train as it fights. Along with the rest of the military, DoD is transforming the way the services train.

The world has dramatically changed, said Paul Mayberry, deputy defense undersecretary for readiness. “The strategic environment has changed,” Mayberry said during an interview, “and the United States military must change also.”

The American military no longer confronts a known enemy with standing forces. U.S. personnel have to train to fight major combat operations, but they also need to train to handle smaller contingencies. The American military’s emphasis now is on flexibility and adaptability, Mayberry said. The military must be able to deal with surprise, uncertainty and asymmetric threats.

At the same time the American military is moving away from large permanent standing organizations with large support elements backing them up, Mayberry said. Joint task forces will handle these contingencies, and the JTFs will generally be “smaller and highly distributed joint and combined forces.”

The biggest transformation in training will be the emphasis on joint operations. “We fight as a joint team,” Mayberry said. “We must train routinely in a joint environment.”

The Joint National Training Capability is the centerpiece of the new training initiative. “The ultimate end state of JNTC is that no individual, unit or staff enters combat prior to being able to fully experience the complexity and stress of their joint requirements in a robust and realistic training environment,” he said.

The capability was initially supposed to be a Joint National Training Center – a place where joint task forces would train before deployment.

But the thinking changed and experience showed that the center does not have to be a physical place, but a way to link forces throughout the world. So an Army unit, for example, training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., could link with Air Force units training out of Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Marine units training at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, Calif., and with Navy ships maneuvering off the coast of California.

Or the units don’t even have to be in the same hemisphere. Using

simulations, staffs can train wherever they can get a computer connection. This would closely mirror the way the commands worked together during Operation Iraqi Freedom, with staffs working closely together even though based in Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Tampa, Fla.

The goal is realistic joint training “against thinking and adaptive oppositional forces,” Mayberry said. Like the service training areas, the Joint National Training Capability will have instruments in place to help officials reconstruct battles and a process that allows feedback leading to an after-action review.

Training transformation will allow the United States military to function in a multinational coalition setting, Mayberry said. It will also allow DoD to operate with other federal government agencies as well as work with state and local governments.

The U.S. Joint Forces Command is in charge of the effort to set up the JNTC. Now specialists are working to see if the military training ranges can be linked together. Mayberry said this first phase will culminate in January with the first JNTC exercise in the western United States. The JNTC’s initial operating capability is scheduled for October 2004, he said.

Mayberry said that DoD will spend \$1.3 billion on this capability through fiscal 2009, and he expects the capabilities to change over time. “Just as the service training areas developed over time, I expect the JNTC will grow as the idea matures,” he said.

Bright Star 2003 Exercise canceled

The Department of Defense announced today that the United States has decided it will not be able to participate in this year’s Bright Star exercise scheduled for next month. The decision was made in view of continued operations in the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere by the United States and other nations. The Bright Star exercise will not be held this year.

“This was an extremely difficult decision,” said Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. “Given our current worldwide commitments, it seemed best to take a temporary break from this exercise, as we did after Operation Desert Storm. Bright Star is one of our most important exercises and reflects the value we attach to our strong relationship with Egypt, he said.”

Bright Star is a combined exercise conducted bi-annually since 1981 in which more than 70,000 troops from more than 10 countries normally participate.

The Department regularly evaluates the potential impact of scheduled exercises on real world operations. To date, for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1, 2002, 49 of 182 exercises originally intended have been canceled or rescheduled.

NATO takes over Afghan peacekeeping force

by Todd Pitman

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - NATO took command of the 5,000-strong international peacekeeping force in the Afghan capital on Monday, a historic move that marks the alliance's first operation outside Europe since it was created 54 years ago.

The alliance took over from Germany and the Netherlands, which have jointly led the International Security Assistance Force, known as ISAF, since Feb. 10.

"ISAF's name and mission will not change," said NATO Deputy Secretary General Alessandro Minuto Rizzo. "But what will change as of today is the level of commitment and capability NATO provides."

The outgoing commander, German Lt. Gen. Norbert van Heyst, handed over control during a formal ceremony in an auditorium inside the capital's Amani High School. The new commander, NATO Lt. Gen. Gotz Gliemeroth, who is also from Germany, accepted a green flag from Van Heyst to mark the change. Gliemeroth's deputy will be Canadian Maj. Gen. Andrew Leslie.

The school auditorium was ringed by scores of armed peacekeepers and ISAF armored cars mounted with machine guns. Bomb-sniffing dogs were on hand to search for any explosives.

Present were President Hamid Karzai, German Defense Minister Peter Struck, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Gen. James L. Jones and a host of diplomats and U.N. officials.

Struck said in a speech that the handover showed the world's commitment to rebuilding war-shattered Afghanistan.

"Afghanistan must not lapse back into anarchy and chaos and must not again become the home of global terror, as was the case under the rule of the Taliban," Struck said.

"What the people of Afghanistan wish for is a stable peace. They are pinning great hopes on the international community. The support of NATO for ISAF... is a visible expression of the fact that the people of Afghanistan will not be let down."

NATO is taking over command in large part to end the arduous task of searching for a new "lead nation" every six months to run ISAF.

NATO spokesman Mark Laity told reporters in Kabul on Sunday that a single, open-ended command by NATO would add more continuity to the mission as well as an institutional memory. Most commanders, after learning the intricacies of Afghanistan, have been rotated out after six-month tours-of-duty.



German soldiers from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) form an honor guard during the change in command of the peacekeeping operation for the Afghan capital from Germany and the Netherlands to NATO in Kabul on August 11, 2003. Command of the Kabul force is NATO's first ever operation outside Europe in its 54-year history. Reuters photo.

ISAF will continue operating exactly as before, with the "same mission, same mandate, same banner," he said.

The 30-nation force was created in December 2001 to bolster security in Kabul in the wake of the U.S.-led war that toppled the Taliban, which had granted haven to Osama bin Laden's network.

About 90 percent of ISAF's troops are from NATO countries, though 15 of the 30 contributing countries are - and will still be - from non-NATO nations, said German peacekeeping spokesman Lt. Col. Thomas Lobbering.

The deployment in Asia will be NATO's first outside Europe since the organization was formed during the Cold War to provide a bulwark against possible attacks by the former Soviet Union.

"NATO is a defensive alliance and it still is. But previously how you defended yourself was defined by parking your tanks along your borders and preventing the former Soviet Union and its allies crossing," Laity said.

"What we saw on Sept. 11 was that the most powerful member of the alliance was attacked by a threat which emanated from Afghanistan. So the traditional concept of defense needed to be revised," Laity said.

NATO will face the same challenge other lead nations have in the past: ensuring stability in Kabul and preventing possible terrorist

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School enrolls plan for training future soldiers; Campus concept envisioned for Ordnance University

by Al Schwartz, Chief of Public Affairs, Redstone Rocket

“Our students come to us for Advanced Individual Training after nine weeks of Basic Combat Training. These soldiers are volunteers. They’re energetic and smart,” Col. David Hafele, commander of the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School, said. “They have high expectations.”

Instruction is provided to about 1,000 students at any one time during the year in several specialty areas.

“The school has evolved over its 50 years at Redstone Arsenal,” Hafele said. “Our focus had been missile and munitions maintenance. But it has become more and more high-tech and the focus is more on electronics maintenance.”

The school is also very involved in homeland security and anti-terrorism training. It instructs the technical escort officers who are responsible for identifying and transporting biological and chemical material, teaches how to render safe various explosive devices and munitions; and for the FBI, the school provides the instructors and facilities to train local, state and federal public safety bomb technicians.

Facilities and infrastructure

Taking facilities that are 45-50 years old and adapting them for modern training can be a challenge.

“We have to plan to replace the facilities. We have great instructors, staff and soldiers,” Hafele said. “Now we need great facilities and

NATO takes over Afghan peacekeeping force continued

strikes. ISAF suffered its worst-ever hostile casualties in June, when a suicide attacker driving an explosives-laden taxi killed four German peacekeepers and wounded 29 others.

Despite such threats, the capital is considered a safe island in a sea of insecurity. Much of Afghanistan is ruled by rival warlords whose armed factions frequently turn their guns on each other. A vast area along the southern and eastern border with Pakistan, meanwhile, is home to a low-level guerrilla insurgency being waged by Taliban rebels and their allies.

Karzai’s government has repeatedly called for ISAF’s mandate to be expanded outside the capital, particularly with general elections due in June 2004.

So far, however, no nation has been willing to support that endeavor, which would require at least 10,000 additional troops.

NATO currently leads other peacekeeping forces in Kosovo and Bosnia.

infrastructure.”

Under Hafele’s direction, the school has developed a 15-year master plan that would replace yesterday’s buildings with modern training facilities and housing and improve the quality of life for students as well as the staff. The school headquarters would be moved deeper on post, to Vincent Road. New training buildings would each contain about 60,000 square feet of space and consist of classrooms and highbays. The plan calls for green space, new barracks and a parade ground. Traffic patterns would be changed and perhaps most important * there would be room for expansion.

“The cost will be significant,” Hafele said. “But the long-term results will also be significant. We’ll have fewer buildings, more efficient use of space, reduced overhead costs and increased safety and force protection. We would make the school more campus-like * an Ordnance University for the Army.”

The school is based at Redstone Arsenal, but has units at four other locations * Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., and Forts Gordon, Ga., Sill, Okla., and Bliss, Texas.

“I would really like to consolidate the school here. Some training would continue at Eglin and Fort Bliss because of the specific on-site training we perform there, but we could clearly relocate training from Forts Sill and Gordon,” Hafele said. “That would bring another 600 students here at any one time and another 230 permanent party.”

Quality of life improvement

The first building in the construction plan would be to support the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, a wheeled variant of the Multiple Launch Rocket System. HIMARS is an all-weather precision fire, deep strike weapons system for early entry and objective forces. “We need a building in place by fiscal year 2010 to support that project,” Hafele said. That means the money would need to be appropriated in FY ’07 and the facility built in FY ’08 and FY ’09.

Hafele’s vision to improve training and quality of life extends beyond the school. He has been working closely with Col. Bob Devlin, garrison commander, to develop plans that include other changes.

“The new dining facility and bowling center that Redstone has under way will significantly improve life for soldiers and instructors,” Hafele said.

“We also want to construct a centralized in/out processing center for soldiers, build a new troop sales store for uniforms and other items closer to the barracks area, and partner with a commercial entity to bring a first-run movie theater on post,” he said. Other improvements include a replacement to the old gymnasium in fiscal 2007, a munitions training facility in FY ’06 and a Technical Escort training facility in fiscal 2007.

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3 U.S. warships approach Liberian coast

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - President Charles Taylor, blamed for 14 years of bloodshed in Liberia and indicted for war crimes in Sierra Leone, resigned Monday and surrendered power to his vice president.

Within two hours, three U.S. warships appeared on the horizon off the coast of the capital, Monrovia. Liberians rushed to the city beaches, hopeful that American peacekeepers were arriving to help end violence in this nation founded more than 150 years ago by freed American slaves.

It remained unclear, however, when - or if - Taylor would go into exile in Nigeria as promised, and rebels besieging the capital threatened more fighting if the former warlord does not leave the country immediately.

At his long-awaited resignation ceremony, Taylor claimed that history would judge him kindly and exhorted the international community to help Liberia. "We beg of you, we plead with you not to make this another press event."

Taylor had reneged on past promises to resign, but this time faced pressure from the United States as well as West African leaders.

"History will be kind to me. I have fulfilled my duties," he said, adding, "I have accepted this role as the sacrificial lamb ... I am the whipping boy."

U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the warships belonged to the USS Iwo Jima amphibious group, on standby in the region to provide logistical support to a West African peace force.

President Bush has conditioned U.S. assistance on Taylor's departure and a cease-fire. So far, just seven U.S. Marines are on the ground in Monrovia as liaisons between the United States and peacekeepers.

Wearing a white safari suit and carrying his trademark staff, Taylor looked on as successor Moses Blah was sworn in under heavy security. Steel blinds guarded windows against assassination attempts, like a 1996 try on Taylor's life in the same building that killed two aides.

Placing his left hand on the Bible and raising his right, Blah pledged to "faithfully, conscientiously and impartially discharge the duties and functions of the Republic of Liberia."

He began his presidency with a moment of silence for all those have

School enrolls plan for training future soldiers; Campus concept envisioned for Ordnance University continued

"We're really excited about the Ordnance University master plan," Hafele said. "We need to make the case to the Army leadership and if the Army sees its value, then it will go to Congress."

"It's just a plan right now," he said, "but it could be a reality tomorrow."

died in Liberia's wars. "Let the nation begin to heal," Blah said. "Let all of us unite as one people and work to peace."

Rebels have rejected Taylor's choice of successor - a longtime ally and comrade in arms - and demanded that a neutral candidate be chosen to preside over a transition government until elections can be held.

Inside the velvet-draped room in the Executive Mansion, Ghana's President John Kufuor told about 300 Liberian and other dignitaries that Blah would hand power to a transitional government in October.

"Today's ceremony marks the end of an era in Liberia," Kufuor said, speaking as head of a West African bloc that has sent peacekeepers to Liberia. "It is our expectation that today the war in Liberia has ended."

He also said South Africa would be contributing troops to the West African force, which started deploying last week.

Outside, Monrovia's beleaguered people cheered Nigerian peacekeepers, part of a vanguard peace force meant to build to 3,250 West African soldiers. The crowd had reserved celebrations over Taylor's resignation until it was official.

"I can hardly believe it. He has brought too much suffering on the Liberian people," said Henry Philips, 38, a former security official. "His absence is better than his presence."

Taylor had pledged to hand over power at one minute before noon (7:59 a.m. EDT) but was delayed at the airport where he welcomed Kufuor, South African President Thabo Mbeki, Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano and Togolese Prime Minister Koffi Sama.

Pickup trucks full of armed rebels raced toward the front Monday as insurgents threatened to resume fighting if Taylor stays in the country. While he has accepted an asylum offer in Nigeria, he has hedged on when he will go.

"Unless Taylor leaves the country by one minute past 12 noon, I shall attack," rebel Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Abdulla Seyeah Sheriff said from Monrovia's rebel-held island port area. "If Taylor leaves the country, there'll be peace."

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo did not attend the resignation ceremony, but sent his foreign minister. Obasanjo aides said Taylor was expected in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, on Monday.

Two months of intermittent rebel sieges have left over 1,000 civilians dead in Monrovia, as government and insurgent forces duel with the city of 1.3 million as their battlefield. The war has left Taylor controlling little but downtown, referred to derisively by rebels as Taylor's "Federal Republic of Central Monrovia."

The president remained defiant to the end, on Sunday calling the

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A British soldier playfully arm wrestles an Iraqi man through the gates of the British office, Monday, Aug. 11, 2003, in Baghdad, Iraq. Late Sunday, two bombs exploded about 60-70 meters (yards) from the British office in central Baghdad, witnesses said. There was no visible damage to the office, but a Syrian national who was part of a convoy of trucks taking supplies to the office was injured, according to the witnesses. (AP Photo/Dario Lopez-Mills)

3 U.S. warships approach Liberian coast continued

rebel uprising an “American war” and suggesting it was motivated by U.S. eagerness for Liberia’s gold, diamonds and other reserves.

“They can call off their dogs now,” Taylor said of the United States’ alleged support of the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, or LURD. “We can have peace.”

U.S. Ambassador John Blaney dismissed the charge as he waited for Taylor’s resignation ceremony to begin.

Taylor launched Liberia’s 14 years of near-constant conflict with a 1989-96 insurgency. International aid agencies estimate virtually all of Liberia’s roughly 3 million people have been chased from their home by war, at one time or another.

He was elected president in 1997 on threats of plunging the country into renewed bloodshed. Rebels - including some of Taylor’s rivals from the previous war - took up arms against him two years later.

His ragtag forces, paid by looting, are accused by rights groups and Liberia’s people of routine raping, robbing, torture, forced labor and summary killings. Rebels, to a lesser extent so far, likewise are accused of abuse.

Taylor was indicted by U.N.-backed court for war crimes in neighboring Sierra Leone, where he allegedly supported a rebel movement notorious for hacking off the limbs of civilians.

Perhaps crucially, Taylor made no mention Sunday of his vow to leave Liberia, declaring: “I will always remember you wherever I am, and I say, God willing, I will be back.”

U.S. troops raid Iraqi village near Iran

AIN LALIN, Iraq (AP) — U.S. forces raided a village near the Iranian border Monday in search of an Iraqi official who allegedly planned attacks on American troops, but failed to find him.

The former regime member is on the U.S. list of 55 most-wanted Iraqis and who has gained a growing importance as the coalition thins the ranks of Saddam Hussein’s inner circle, said Lt. Col. Mark Young. Young would not name the target.

His 67th Armored Regiment’s 3rd Battalion sealed off the village during the raid.

“If I was Saddam Hussein, I would be sleeping with one eye open and probably be a nervous wreck by now,” Young said. “He’s got to hear footsteps behind him.”

Soldiers detained about 70 men and were questioning many of them late Monday, 4th Infantry spokeswoman Maj. Josslyn Aberle said. Soldiers also found five arms caches, including mortars, tank rounds and artillery rounds, she said.

The raid, which the Army dubbed Operation Cliffhanger, began when the silhouettes of 14 Black Hawks crept in low behind a ridge just east of the village and dropped off soldiers who cut off escape routes the south and east.

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Al Qaeda claims Jakarta Marriott blast

From CNN Jakarta Bureau Chief Maria Ressa

JAKARTA, Indonesia (CNN) —The al Qaeda terrorist network has claimed responsibility for last week's bombing of the Marriott Hotel in the Indonesian capital Jakarta and is promising more attacks, terror experts have confirmed for CNN.

The claim was released to al Qaeda sympathizer and Arab media sites over the weekend in an unsigned statement.

"This operation is part of a series of operations that Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri has promised to carry out," the statement said, referring to last Tuesday's blast at the Marriott, which left at least 11 people dead and over 100 injured.

The statement called the attack "a fatal slap on the face of America and its allies in Muslim Jakarta, where faith has been denigrated by the dirty American presence and the discriminatory Australian presence."

Al-Zawahiri is Osama bin Laden's closest adviser, as well as his doctor. He has made frequent appearances at bin Laden's side, usually in a trio completed by the late military committee commander Mohammed Atef, who was killed in November 2001 during an air strike in Afghanistan.

In the statement, al Qaeda made a familiar list of demands — including an end to the war on terror, the release of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and that the United States and its allies leave Muslim lands.

Unless these demands are met, the statement claims, the attacks will continue.

Jemaah Islamiyah

The statement followed last week's announcement by Indonesian police that Jemaah Islamiyah or JI, al Qaeda's arm in Southeast Asia, carried out the attack on the Marriott Hotel.

Police said the suspected suicide bomber was a JI member who attended an Islamic boarding school notorious for funneling recruits into the terrorist group.

"The claim has the hallmarks of al Qaeda. Al Qaeda always refers to certain individuals and certain situations," said Rohan Gunaratna, an expert on the terror group.

The statement went on to say the Marriott Hotel was attacked because CIA agents questioning Indonesian militants in custody were staying there.

The U.S. Embassy in Jakarta refused to comment.

"It shows very clearly that JI is an appendage of al Qaeda, that JI is working very closely in concert with al Qaeda, that JI is an associate group of al Qaeda, that JI is willing to conduct terrorist operations, terrorist attacks in keeping with the mandate of al Qaeda," Gunaratna said.



Indonesian investigators examine the bombing site.

Indonesia's defense minister has said the perpetrators behind the Marriott attack had received training in Pakistan and Afghanistan from al Qaeda bomb-making experts.

Minister Matori Abdul Djilil said he was convinced JI was behind the attack.

"There are many more Jemaah Islamiyah members on the loose in Indonesia," he said last week.

"Each one of them has special abilities received from training in Afghanistan and Pakistan."

The U.S. State Department warned last Friday that the terrorists behind the bombing may be planning further attacks against American targets in Indonesia.

U.S. troops raid Iraqi village near Iran continued

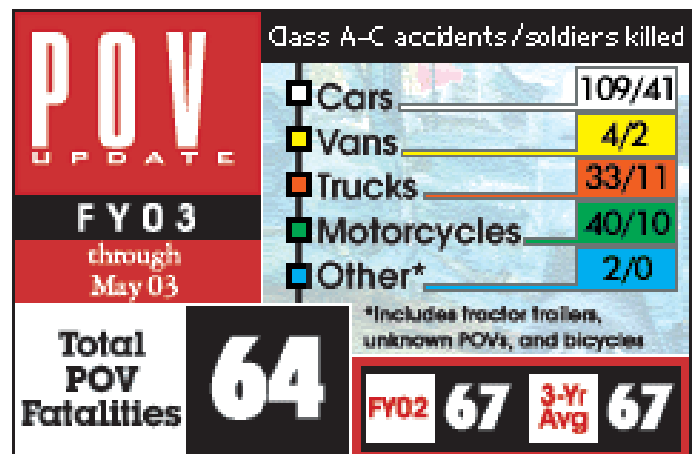
Tanks rumbled in from the west. Apache helicopter gunships swooped down on the village as U.S. Air Force A-10 tankbuster planes and F-15 fighters flew overhead.

There was no resistance and soldiers from the 8th Infantry Regiment's 2nd Brigade searched door to door and entered each of the village's 40 houses.

The village, 30 miles from the border with Iran, is in a rural area where U.S. forces had not yet established a presence, Young said.

"To maintain the element of surprise, we intentionally had not gone close to this area," Young said.

The Army had been warned that its target had men on lookout and may have had anti-aircraft guns set up in the village, Young said.



Iraqi heat makes soldiers' work harder

by Steven R. Hurst

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - It's 122 degrees in the shade.

The temperature in the Iraqi capital - already superheated by resistance to the American occupation - has danced around that enervating, shoe-sole frying figure for days now.

This year, with electricity in short supply after the war, what is normally a nuisance has become a catalyst for violence that raises the deadly threat facing U.S. and British soldiers.

Two American tanks rumbled by Monday as Saad Ali, 37, welded a window frame in the ironmonger district in northwest Baghdad.

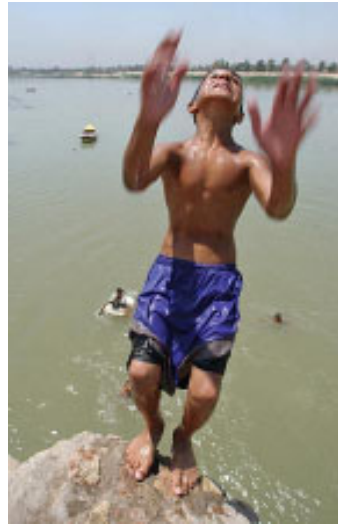
He lifted an old pair of sun glass lenses, held in place by a braid of rubber bands. Grime circled his eyes; circles of perspiration dimpled his bright green T-shirt, shot through with holes from welding sparks.

"I slow down a lot in the summer," he said. "If I don't keep these iron bars out of the sun, I can't touch them."

Baghdad is always hot in summer. The difference this year is the electricity cuts. Normally, most Baghdadis stay cool through the August heat with air conditioners or old water-evaporation coolers.

But with no electricity, there's no cooling. And who's to blame? The Americans, who haven't been able to bring electricity generation back to prewar levels.

In Basra, 280 miles to the southeast and even hotter, the blazing heat and power cuts brought angry residents into the street over the weekend, leaving at least two people dead in violent confrontations with British soldiers. A third person, a civilian coalition employee of



A child jumps to do a back-flip into the Tigris river at the Adamiyha neighborhood in Baghdad, Iraq on Sunday Aug. 10, 2003. Bathing in the river brings a little respite for residents of Baghdad whose summer has been especially trying as they have had to cope foreign occupation of their land, extreme heat at above 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit), power shortages and long lines at gas stations among many other woes. (AP Photo/Dario Lopez-Mills)

Nepalese origin, was shot and killed by an unknown attacker while delivering mail to U.N. workers in Iraq's second-largest city.

Many people say they are edgy because they can't sleep; their houses are too hot at night without air conditioning.

Iraq's American administrator, L. Paul Bremer, blames antiquated infrastructure for delays in restoring power. Beyond that, he says, U.S. authorities have spread what electricity there is around the grid more evenly this summer. Saddam Hussein used to make sure the capital was served 100 percent. The provinces got what was left.

Hanging off the roof of a hotel by a quarter-inch cable, a bucket of paint hooked to a seat that looked like a child's tree swing, 40-year-old Salam Salman ignored the 10 stories of overheated air between him and the ground.

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U.S. Army soldiers from Alpha company of the 8th Infantry Regiment's 2nd Battalion rest in the shade of an armored medics' vehicle after a pre-dawn raid in the village of Ain Lalin, Iraq, Monday Aug. 11, 2003. U.S. soldiers piled out of Blackhawks to raid the remote village near the Iranian border where they believed one of Iraq's top fugitives had used as base to plot guerilla attacks on U.S. forces. Monday's pre-dawn raid on the village 100 kilometers (60 miles) northeast of Baghdad failed to capture its main target, a former regime officer who is on the U.S. list 55 of most-wanted Iraqis. (AP Photo/Murad Sezer/Pool)

Iraqi heat makes soldiers' work harder continued

A paint brush in one hand, cigarette in the other, he laughed when asked about the heat.

"Look, I'm in the shade," he told a reporter leaning out a window. "When it gets sunny here. I paint on the other side. It's not a problem."

The heat has been deadly for American troops who patrol the city in 12-hour shifts, weighed down with weapons, helmets and 30-pound flak jackets. One soldier reportedly died of heat stroke over the weekend in a convoy, and a second was found dead in his living quarters - cause of death not immediately known.

Sgt. 1st Class Ron Borchardt, 38, of Port Washington, Wis., said he and his men are drinking nearly 10 quarts of bottled water each day. Sitting in a Humvee parked in the shade on Haifa Street, Borchardt moaned: "It's got a lot hotter since yesterday."

"Someone told me that soldiers aren't like plants: we can go anywhere and live," Borchardt quipped.

First Lt. Christopher Lunge, who lectures soldiers on health care, said a big worry is apathy brought on by the heat.

"They don't care what's going on. Their guard goes down," Lunge said.

Abathar Hamid, a 37-year-old mechanic, squatted in front of a 1980 Datsun outside his mud-brick auto repair shop in north Baghdad.

Putting down his wrenches, he complained he didn't have electricity.

"You just have to live through it," he said.

Iraqis have lots of sayings about the heat, as they should, living in one of the world's hottest places.

"When an Iraqi is condemned to hell, he takes an overcoat," goes one.

Squadron Leader Neil Chapman, with the British mobile meteorological unit in Basra, said the heat was the result of a prevailing northwest summer wind that blows the already hot air from Turkey and Syria across the blazing Iraqi desert. The dry sand there is often 140 degrees under unrelenting sun.

Iraq is virtually landlocked, with no moderating influence from the sea. That and the prevailing wind - which the Arabs call the Shamal, or north wind - turn the country into a furnace in the summer.

But it's good for the dates that ripen in the intense August heat.

Beneath a date palm tree growing inside a Baghdad traffic median, a small white donkey grazes every day on a patch of grass protected by the thin shade of the towering tree, as traffic flashes by on either side. Its owner takes it away at night and brings it back early in the morning.

It appears to be heeding Hamid's instructions with aplomb: just living through it.

Navy dolphins used as sentinels in Persian Gulf

by Adnan Malik

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) - The U.S. Navy has deployed dolphins to the Persian Gulf region to protect coalition ships and piers against terrorist attack.

The dolphins are trained to find a swimmer or diver and alert their handlers by knocking a ball suspended from a patrol boat.

"If there are any uninvited guests - swimmers and divers - trying to cause harm to U.S. and coalition naval assets, the dolphins can detect and locate them," said Lt. Josh Frey, a spokesman of the 5th Fleet, which is based in Bahrain.

Citing security reasons, Lt. Cmdr. Martin Anderson would not say how many dolphins have arrived, when they were deployed and why they were brought in now.

"We have a good enough reason to employ them here," said Anderson, who commands the Naval Forces Central Command Special Operations at the 5th Fleet base.

Anderson spoke as a 400-pound dolphin named Luke made a brief appearance at the Mina Salman port swimming alongside a Navy patrol boat. The 29-year-old, 9-foot-long dolphin stood on its tail to receive a fish that a Navy handler on the patrol boat threw in his

direction.

The Navy started using marine mammals in the early 1960s, when scientists studied if dolphins' sleek shape had hydrodynamic qualities that could help improve underwater missiles.

It used dolphins during the Vietnam War, and again in the Iraq war to detect mines at the country's only deep-water port, Umm Qasr.

Dolphins were last used in Bahrain in the late 1980s during the Iran-Iraq war, when several oil tankers were attacked in the Persian Gulf. At the time, six dolphins patrolled the Bahrain harbor to protect U.S. ships from mines and enemy swimmers and escorted Kuwaiti oil tankers.

The dolphins replace sea lions that were in the region to be trained and tested for similar duty.

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South African soldiers secure the airport for the arrival of South African President Thabo Mbeki in Monrovia, Liberia, Monday, Aug. 11, 2003. (AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam)



Iraq's new President Ibrahim Al-Jaafari speaks to the media in Baghdad, Iraq on Monday Aug. 11, 2003. Al-Jaafari's term ends in August. The presidency will rotate among nine Governing Council members through April. (AP Photo/Dario Lopez-Mills)



U.S. Army soldiers Cpl. Bernard Kintoki, left, and Spc. Aloysius Goodshield of South Dakota, from the 588th Engineering Battalion take position during a pre-dawn raid in the village of Ain Lalin, Iraq, early Monday Aug. 11, 2003. U.S. soldiers piled out of Blackhawks to raid the remote village near the Iranian border where they believed one of Iraq's top fugitives had used as base to plot guerilla attacks on U.S. forces. Monday's pre-dawn raid on the village 100 kilometers (60 miles) northeast of Baghdad failed to capture its main target, a former regime officer who is on the U.S. list 55 of most-wanted Iraqis. (AP Photo/Murad Sezer/Pool)



Plainclothes policemen examine the scene after an explosion outside of a government training center in Ankara, Turkey, Friday Aug. 1, 2003. A second bomb went off as explosive experts tried to defuse it, wounding 17 police officers who had come to investigate the earlier blast. The explosion occurred when a bomb expert, wearing no protective gear, opened a bag containing the explosives outside the government training center for prosecutors and judges in the capital. Many of the policemen injured had gathered to see the bomb being defused. (AP Photo/Cihan)

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